Does This Apply to Me?

Under a new EPA chemical accident prevention rule, some operators of ammonia refrigeration systems will have to implement a risk management program and file a risk management plan (RMP) with EPA by June 21, 1999. If you store or use a total of more than 10,000 pounds of ammonia at your facility in one or more interconnected tanks, receiver vessels, or pipelines, you are likely to be subject to this rule. If you operate two refrigeration systems with adjacent equipment, consider the total quantity of ammonia in both systems when determining whether this rule applies to you.

If you have other chemicals at your facility, you can get a complete list of substances regulated under this rule and their thresholds from EPA.

What's It All About?

The risk management program rule (also known as Clean Air Act section 112(r), the RMP rule, or part 68) is designed to prevent serious chemical accidents that could affect public health and the environment and to improve the response to any accidents that do occur.

The rule requires covered facilities to develop and to implement an integrated system to identify hazards and manage risks. If you are subject to this rule, you must analyze worst-case releases, document a five-year history of serious accidents, coordinate with local emergency responders, and file a risk management plan with EPA. If your worst-case release could affect the public, you also must analyze more realistic alternative scenarios and develop and implement a prevention program that includes, among other steps, identification of hazards, written operating procedures, training, maintenance, and accident investigation. If your employees respond to accidental releases, you must implement an emergency response program. The RMP you submit to EPA will summarize your program and will have to be made available to the public.

Compliance Tips

The good news is that many ammonia refrigeration system operators already are complying with many of the prevention requirements because these steps are part of the way you operate safely. If you are subject to the OSHA Process Safety Management Standard, you are likely to be in compliance with almost all of the prevention program requirements and may need to take no other steps to satisfy this part of EPA's rule. If you already have an emergency response plan, you are likely to be in compliance with that part of EPA's rule as well.

Besides helping you prevent accidents, the rule can improve the efficiency of your operation by ensuring that your workers are trained in proper procedures and by using preventive maintenance to reduce equipment breakdowns.

EPA is working with the International Institute of Ammonia Refrigeration (IIAR) to develop a guidance document specifically for operators of ammonia refrigeration systems that will help you understand the requirements as they relate to your operations. The ammonia refrigeration system guidance will make compliance less burdensome by providing industry-specific information and analyses.

Where Can I Get More Information?

If you have access to the Internet, you can get copies of the rule and a wide variety of technical assistance materials at the home page of EPA's Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office (http://www.epa.gov/swercepp/).

You also may obtain copies of these materials as well as answers to your specific questions from EPA's hotline at (800) 424-9346 during normal business hours.

The International Institute of Ammonia Refrigeration can be reached at:

1200 19th Street, NW
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 857-1110

The full text of the rule can be found in Title 40 of the **Code of Federal Regulations** (40 CFR part 68), which is available at most public libraries.

Stamp Here

(Address label here)

EPA
Publication #550-F98-006
U.S Environmental Protection Agency
Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office (CEPPO)
Mail Stop 5104
401 M Street, SW
Washington, DC 20460

RMP SERIES

EPA's Risk Management Program

How Does It Affect Operators of Ammonia Refrigeration Systems?